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(Part A) ⁽¹⁻¹⁴⁾

**TITLE: DAILY SITUATION REPORTS ON
CRISIS IN JORDAN SEPTEMBER 1970**

Room No. 100, F.O. Building, Downing Street.

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SITRETP UP TO 8.30 a.m.,
THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1970

Mr. Philips

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

Situation in Amman

H.M. Ambassador Amman reported at 5.30 p.m. BST on 9 September that the situation had eased in the capital following the reappearance on the scene of the former Chief of Staff, General Mashur Haditha. The Army and the fedayeen had broadcast orders to stop firing, but very heavy firing restarted shortly thereafter. Mr. Philips said he believed that one end of the Embassy building had received a direct rocket hit. The Ambassador concluded that he would have to wait till the morning of 10 September before advising further on plans for evacuation. Mr. Philips added that he had informed M. Rochat by telephone of the situation. The latter confirmed that he had a Red Cross aircraft for 97 passengers standing by for a shuttle service to Beirut.

Hijacked Aircraft: Rochat/Fedayeen Exchanges

2. M. Rochat told Mr. Philips yesterday that he was unable to make contact with PFLP/by telephone. The deadline had accordingly been extended (the PFLP statement to Michael Adams said until 4.00 p.m. (local time), 10 September) in order to give M. Rochat time to talk again. We have heard this morning from Reuters that PFLP in Amman have further extended the deadline by 72 hours.

3. M. Rochat confirmed that the VC 10 is positioned alongside the two previously hijacked aircraft on "Dawson's Field" near Zerqa. It has 114 passengers aboard including 45 British, of which 27 are unaccompanied children. An ICRC team went on board at 19.45 hours local time on 9 September. Details of their visit are not expected until 10 September.

.../ 4.

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4. H.M. Embassy at Berne announced at 01.00 hours on 10 September that the ICRC had been informed that the deadline had been "extended indefinitely". A Red Cross 'plane is to leave Geneva today at 5.00 a.m. local time for Dawson's Field with doctors and supplies (posts have been informed).

Extradition of Miss Khalid

5. The Israeli Ambassador telephoned the text of a personal message from Mr. Eban to the Secretary of State (text attached) in which the Israeli Government stated its readiness to reconsider its position on the extradition of Miss Khalid if a solution involving "the simultaneous release of all the hostages without distinction of nationality or religion" were to emerge.

The Situation at the United Nations

6. A Security Council Consensus was adopted at 7.00 p.m. New York time (midnight BST) without debate as follows:

"The Security Council, gravely concerned at the threat to innocent civilian lives from the hijacking of aircraft and any other interference with international travel,

(i) Appeals to all parties concerned for the immediate release of all passengers and crews without exception held as a result of hijacking and other interference in international travel;

(ii) Calls on States to take all possible legal steps to prevent further hijacking or any other interference with international civil air travel."

7. The President, Sierra Leone, made clear that "all passengers" could be interpreted as including the hijackers themselves (an Arab point). But the Mission stress that this is the best

/that

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that could be obtained in the time available.

8. The following line has been taken in answer to enquiries about H.M.G.'s reaction to the Security Council Consensus: "We are glad that the Security Council, representing the international community as a whole, has unanimously expressed its sentiments in these terms."

Press Interest and Public Enquiries

10. Many telephone calls were received during the night offering advice on how to handle the situation resulting from the hijacking of the BOAC aircraft, but few personal enquiries about those on board.

11. As regards press enquiries, close liaison was maintained with No. 10. Interest was greatest in the approaching deadline. News Department took the line that the deadline had been extended but it was not clear by how much.

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Mr. Smith

THE SITREP UP TO 8.30 a.m., FRIDAY

11 SEPTEMBER, 1970

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

Situation in Amman

No change. Nothing new to report.

Hijacked Aircraft: M. Rochat's negotiations

2. Geneva telegram No. 46 reports M. Rochat's second talk with the Palestinians. The gist of this report (ambiguous in some respects), is that the Palestinians propose the exchange of the seven detainees and the body of the dead hijacker for the transfer of all women, children and sick on the three aircraft to Amman. Amman telegram No. 502 explains that Rochat is satisfied that all women and children would in fact be allowed to leave Jordan if the Palestinian terms were met. The met might then be exchanged for Fedayeen held by the Israelis, and the two detained Algerians (Djelloul and Belaziz). In addition all female Fedayeen prisoners, some prisoners whose physical or mental condition was incompatible with their conditions of imprisonment, and certain special cases of particularly important or heroic fedayeen.

3. A meeting at No. 10, during the night, attended by the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State, Sir D. Greenhill, Sir B. Trend, Sir P. Adams and Mr. Armstrong decided that the proposals were unacceptable. The P.U.S. told Mr. West in Berne on the telephone that the Five Powers should inform Rochat that our position remained unchanged, i.e. that we could not accept a solution that did not involve a total and simultaneous exchange of all detainees from the three aircraft.

4. Berne telegram No. 237, drafted after this conversation, reports that the quadripartite group rejected the Palestinians

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proposals and agreed the text of a telegram to M. Rochat saying that the terms proposed were not entirely clear; that a definite decision could not therefore be reached; that no solution could be accepted which did not involve a total and simultaneous exchange of prisoners; and that the Israeli attitude had so far been negative. The group also agreed another telegram to M. Rochat requesting that all women and children without exception should be evacuated immediately and unconditionally. The Swiss Federal Political Department told the press that unacceptable proposals had been received and counter proposals put forward.

Evacuation of Jordan: Contingency Plan

5. After discussion between Mr. Tripp and the Private Secretary (Mr. Barrington) the Emergency Unit authorised the R.A.F. to despatch two Britannias to Cyprus. They left at 0130 and 0200. H.M. Ambassador Beirut has been asked for his assessment of conditions at Beirut airport. It is however possible that Cyprus would be used in preference to Beirut for the reception of evacuees in transit from Amman.

of 10 September

6. We have received a report from Amman that the Jordanian Chief of Staff believed that he could arrange at H.M.G.'s request the evacuation of all British women and children on the VC 10 and their immediate departure from Jordan. The Secretary of State authorised a telegram to Amman saying that we could not contemplate evacuation of British women and children alone, but that the Jordanian Army's offer should be explored further. The report and the telegram were taken to No. 10 where Sir B. Freud asked that the latter should be suspended. Communications Department did not despatch the

telegram and returned it to us. No. 10 will return this to Sir P. Adams at 0930, 11 September.

BOAC

7. BOAC announced travel restrictions on passengers wishing to travel from Britain, Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, Pakistan and India, stating that all passengers who wished to travel from these areas must book their tickets 72 hours before the time of their departure. These restrictions would affect all bookings placed after midnight G.M.T. on 9/10 September. According to the Board of Trade B.E.A. were taking similar measures. The Emergency Unit despatched a telegram informing posts.

Press Reports and Briefings

8. News Department have had numerous enquiries from the press. Replies have been co-ordinated with No. 10 Press Office and have not gone beyond their statement: i.e. that the P.F.L.P. proposals contained in Rochat's second report (Geneva telegram No. 46 and Amman telegram No. 502) were unacceptable to the four powers. The four powers had made counter proposals which had been transmitted to Rochat.

Sir C. Crowe's meeting with U Thant and Mr. Bunche

9. Sir C. Crowe saw the Secretary-General and Mr. Bunche yesterday evening (Washington time) to discuss the suggestion of a U.N. presence (see UKMis telegram 1900). The Secretary-General and Mr. Bunche were not ~~sanguine~~ about the possibility of a U.N. presence in Jordan because (a) the P.F.L.P. were antagonistic towards the U.N. and (b) the United Nations could only send a representative to Jordan at the invitation of the Jordan Government. U Thant could not see how this could be forthcoming.

10. The State Department have told H.M Embassy Washington that they consider the suggestion untimely and unlikely to help in the immediate circumstances (see Washington telegram No. 2652).

BOAC's contingency plans

11. BOAC last night informed us they were making contingency plans to fly BOAC aircraft into Amman and possibly into Dawson's Field for the evacuation of the hostages. We told the Board of Trade that these plans were quite unrealistic and that we thought it important that contingency planning should be centralised through us. We added that it was likely that in the event of evacuation the I.C.R.C. would be responsible for getting the hostages from Dawson's Field to Amman and thence out of Jordanian territory. Mr. Berry (P.S. to President of the Board of Trade) said he would pass our views on to BOAC.

B.B.C. News Report 0800

12. B.B.C. report that following an Israeli Cabinet meeting Israel is prepared in principle to release at least some of the Fedayeen prisoners. No numbers have been specified. H.M. Embassy at Tel Aviv have been asked to confirm this by Flash telegram.

13. B.B.C. also reports that Iraq has appealed to the commandos to release the hostages.

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RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 20CT 1970

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JORDAN

P.M.

THE SITREP UP TO 6.45 a.m., FRIDAY,
11 SEPTEMBER, 1970

Situation in Amman

Amman has had a quieter day, with traffic moving normally. No reports of incidents have been received, but the tension remains. Amman airport is open to civil air traffic.

Hijacked Aircraft: State of Negotiations

2. The situation has been confused, as a result of increasing pressures brought to bear on the PLFP by other Arabs, and of the PLFP's reaction to this pressure. The Central Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (which is the main body of the Fedayeen and is on the whole hostile to the PLFP) ordered this morning that all the hostages held at Dawson's Field should be brought into Amman immediately. Later Rochat informed representatives of the Western Four that the PLFP had asked the Palestine Red Crescent to organise a convoy to take all the passengers from the 3-hijacked aeroplanes to hotels in Amman.

[He subsequently speculated that this might be a warning of what they would do if their demands were not met.] Later still he said that the PLFP had changed their minds and ordered all the passengers back onto the aeroplanes and connected the mechanism for exploding them.

Rochat said he had tried to calm the PLFP and

SECRET

put to them a compromise proposal that they should agree to the release and evacuation of all the women and children and sick passengers in return for 3 or 4 of the Fedayeen prisoners held by Western countries. The PLFP replied that they would give the ~~necessary~~ answer to his proposal and let him know about the transfer of passengers to the Intercontinental Hotel at a further meeting to be held this evening. ~~for~~ ↴

3. The PLFP also told Rochat that they intended to cancel the time limit of 72 hours (expiring at 1130 BST tomorrow). Although pressed he was unable to be more specific about the effect of this.

4. At Berne irritation has been expressed in the Four Power Group at the confused and contradictory nature of Rochat's reports. There is no sign yet of any softening in the Israelis' attitude on the possible release of Fedayeen detained in Israel in exchange for Israeli and Israeli/American passengers on the TWA and Swissair aircraft.

~~5. At various times we have still not heard the results of Rochat's Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Talk with Mr. Rogers~~

5. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary spoke to the U.S. Secretary of State this afternoon on the telephone. They agreed that the main centre of negotiations should continue to be at Berne. In response to Sir A. Douglas-Home's suggestion that the time had come for the Four to put pressure on the Israelis to discuss the sort of offer which they were prepared to make to the PLFP, Mr. Rogers said that he considered that pressures on all concerned were already sufficiently great.

Evacuation

6. Detailed contingency arrangements continue

Rochat was immediately informed by the Boardinghouse Committee that his compromise proposal was an unacceptable.

~~At various times we have still not heard the results of Rochat's Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Talk with Mr. Rogers~~

Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Talk with Mr. Rogers

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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to be made by Whitehall Departments. 2 RAF Britannias have been prepositioned in Akrotiri and a third aircraft may join them shortly. However, H.M. Ambassador, Amman has reported that latest developments in the hijacking crisis have absorbed all Rochat's attention today and it has not, therefore, been possible for the ICRC to make the necessary arrangements for the evacuation of the foreign community. However, Mr. Phillips is pushing ahead with plans for the departure of non-essential civilians, and has repeated his advice to the British community that they should leave by commercial means during the present lull. It is now clear, however, that evacuation cannot start tomorrow.

Stop Press

7. H.M. Embassy, Amman have confirmed that 66 hijacked persons in the Intercontinental Hotel have been released and are at the airport waiting to travel. Other TWA and Swissair passengers remain in the aircraft ~~at~~ Dawson's Field. Similarly, all the VC 10 passengers, except the 22 (mainly Arabs) released earlier, remain on board the aircraft at Dawson's Field.

8. A telex conversation with Amman continues.

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SITREP UP TO 0800 HOURS 13 SEPTEMBER 1970

(All times referred to are BST)

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10

- 2 OCT 1970

I Situation In Lebanon

There has been no news of any deterioration.

II Situation in Jordan

Tension among the PFLP

H.M. Ambassador Amman reported in a telex conversation at 1700 that the atmosphere in Amman, particularly at the PFLP headquarters, was explosive. Some of the more irresponsible PFLP had let the Embassy know that if within a few hours HMG did not at least give an assurance of their intention to release Leila Khaled there would be serious trouble. Mr. Phillips asked that a statement of our intention to release her should be issued urgently.

Statement on Miss Leila Khaled

2. Shortly afterwards Ministers agreed the following statement, which was issued from No. 10 Downing Street:

"To avoid any misunderstanding or possible loss of life HMG wish to let it be known that they are prepared to return Miss Leila Khaled to an Arab country as part of a satisfactory settlement of the problem of the detained

*In a serial
telex commun
ar 2045*
~~Amman reported that the
Arman have not yet reported the effect of this statement on the
PFLP.~~

III Future of Miss Khaled

Legal Position

3. Under British Law Miss Khaled cannot be kept in a police station for more than five days. She must therefore be moved to some other place of detention before 14 September. The Home Office intend to move her to Holloway Prison on 13 September, probably in the late afternoon.

/Statement

Statement

4. The Home Office intend to issue a statement emphasising that this is purely a physical move which in no way alters her status. Mr. Gallagher has pointed out that it is essential for ~~this statement to reach~~ the PFLP ^{to be warned} before the move takes place and that urgent action must be taken on this early on 13 September.

IV

Future of the Passengers

New terms for their release

first

5. Mr. Phillips reported in his telex conversation that M. Frémond, Vice President of the ICRC, had arrived in Jordan, where the fedayeen had put new terms to him. These were:-

- (a) non-Israeli and non-American passengers will be released unconditionally, apart from 6 Swiss citizens, 6 Germans and 6 British to be kept as hostages, pending the arrival in Amman of the 7 fedayeen prisoners. If the Palestinian prisoners were released to Amman immediately none of these hostages would be kept;
- (b) Israeli citizens with military status will be detained pending an exchange with Palestinian prisoners in Israel;
- (c) all American passengers will be freed unconditionally except those considered to be dual U.S.-Israeli nationals who have military status in Israel. The latter will be detained in the same way as the Israelis with military status.

6. M. Frémond regarded this offer as the only possible solution, ~~as he had therefore~~ told the fedayeen that he considered the mandate of the ICRC finished.

7. Mr. Phillips said that, after the blowing up of the three aircraft, all the passengers ^{from the Vc-10} had been brought to Amman. ~~The majority were in hotels, but those selected as hostages, were being held separately. who were being detained in "a more easy spot."~~ *The*

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According to Amman ^{tel/} 535 the following eight passengers have yet been released (this list does square with para paragraph 5(a) above.)

8. The British and Dutch hostages are:-

Mr. De Koning (a Dutch national)
Mr. Dunne (U.K. citizen of Fox & Gibbons)
Sgt. Hartel (R.A.F.)
Major Potts (U.K. citizen attached Abu Dhabi Defence Force)
Lt. Cdr. Wallis R.N. (U.K. citizen - HQ British Forces, Persian Gulf)
Captain Gouldbourne (BOAC - VC.10 Captain)
First Officer Lindsay (BOAC crew)
Engineer Officer D'Eyore (BOAC crew)

Transfer of released passengers to the U.K.

9. Arrangements have been made to transfer the released passengers from the VC.10 to the U.K. today. They will assemble at the Intercontinental Hotel and travel to Amman Airport under joint Army-Fedayeen escort for airlifting to Nicosia by a chartered Royal Jordanian aircraft.

10. From Nicosia they will transfer to a BOAC Boeing 707, which is at present in Nicosia, and are due to arrive at Heathrow between 15.45 hours and 16.15 hours. Mr. Godber will be meeting the first arrivals.

11. Present information is that the passengers will be 59 in all, as follows:-

Unaccompanied children	52
Adult males	4
Male crew	4
Female Crew	2
Women and accompanied children	17.

12. BOAC have advised all next of kin or contacts and Welfare Section are meeting two Diplomatic Service children.

13. At the same time BOAC intend to send back to the U.K. three of their local Amman staff who are non-U.K. nationals and the F.C.O. have been asked to give whatever assistance may be necessary.

/Negotiations

V

Negotiations in Berne

14. FCO telno 162 to Berne instructs H.M. Ambassador to arrange for a five-power meeting to be held urgently to consider the latest PFLP proposals, at which he should take the following line:-

- (i) the Berne Group should neither accept nor reject the latest proposals;
- (ii) there should be no public statement from Berne about these proposals without reference to the five Governments;
- (iii) the British Government hope it will be possible for the five Governments to work together to achieve a non-discriminatory settlement. But, on all the evidence, it will be necessary for this purpose for the Israelis to make a contribution to the package in addition to the two Algerians;
- (iv) the British Government fully understand the Israelis difficulty about having to declare their intention when they have not received from the PFLP a list of those whose release they require. But if there is to be a non-discriminatory settlement, clearly the Israelis will have to contribute by releasing detained Arabs and they will have to make their intentions known soon. If, on the other hand, the Israelis are not prepared to contribute, the point may be reached where some of the ^{four} ~~five~~ Governments might have to consider whether to abandon the non-discriminatory approach;
- (v) the Group should agree that the ICRC has a central role to play in the continuing negotiations with the PFLP. Freymond should therefore be urged to continue to act on behalf of the five Governments. If he is unwilling to do so, the ICRC should at once appoint some other representative.

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15. H.M. Ambassadors at Washington, Bonn and Tel Aviv were instructed to inform the Governments to which they were accredited of these instructions.

The Meeting

16. H.M. Ambassador at Berne reported the meeting by telephone, and confirmed his account in Berne telno 255.

17. Mr. Midgley said he had put forward the five points as instructed. The proposals in (iv) above were supported by the American, Swiss and German representative, but opposed by the Israeli. After the meeting the Israeli did, however, say privately to Mr. Midgley that he was glad he could now report something firm to Jerusalem and ask for instructions.

18. The Berne Group telegraphed to Freymond urging that the ICRC should continue with its mission in Jordan and recalling him to Berne for further instructions. The President of the ICRC ^{Mr. Neville} sent a similar telegram, but suggested that Rochat too should return. *In case a complete ICRC job ensue*

19. The Group discussed the possibility that the ICRC might stop acting on behalf of the ~~five~~ Governments. The Swiss suggested that M. Paul Ruegger (Swiss Ambassador to London 1945-47) might take over.

20. It was agreed that a further meeting should take place this evening. *M. Freymond would attend together with M. Neville.*

Reaction in Tel Aviv

21. Mr. Barnes telephoned at 00.50 and confirmed his conversation in Tel Aviv telno 824.

22. He had telephoned to the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry who rejected the British proposals outright, claimed that they represented a diktat to the Israelis, and asked whether they had been cleared with Washington.

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23. In order to moderate the effect of the British proposals Mr. Barnes suggested that the Secretary of State should send a personal message to Mr. Eban in the most emollient terms possible, emphasising that we were only putting forward ideas for confidential discussion between friends.

Message to Mr. Eban

24. After discussions with the P.U.S., Sir P. Adams, Mr. Gallagher, the Private Secretary (Mr. Barrington) and the Duty Officer at No. 10, the Unit sent a telegram (no. 409 to Tel Aviv) instructing Mr. Barnes to pass a personal message to Mr. Eban from the Secretary of State assuring the Israelis that no kind of threat was being issued and emphasising the importance H.M.G. attached to sticking together.

25. ^{However,} The message in no way altered the purpose or substance of the ~~British proposals~~. ~~instructions given to Barnes.~~

Reaction in Washington

26. Mr. Freeman reported (Washington telno 2674) that he had spoken to Mr. Rogers who thought it essential for the five to stick together but that tonight (12 September) was not the time to smoke out the Israelis.

27. Mr. Rogers said he understood that all the passengers already released to Amman should leave ~~early~~ next morning (13 September). This would mean that the release of all but about 50 passengers had been obtained without any counter-concession from the five. This was a new and improved situation, albeit very obscure. He said, cautiously, that he doubted whether the Israelis would, when the chips were down, prevent the completion of a package by refusal to cooperate in any deal. He believed overt pressure by other governments would be counter-productive. The next step was to examine the new situation.

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VI

I.C.A.O.

28. The Secretary of State said he wanted it known publicly that H.M.G. supported President Nixon's intended message to the President of the Council of I.C.A.O. asking him to convene the Council in an emergency meeting. The President of the Board of Trade was informed and agreed to issue a statement to this effect when he had seen President Nixon's statement.

VII

Press Line

29. There have been numerous enquiries, many chasing unfounded rumours. News Department have taken the general line that there has been little to report in the way of developments. They have said that representatives of the five Governments continue their consultations, the Red Cross is still charged with its mission of maintaining contact with the fedayeen and the logistics of the evacuation of some passengers are being worked out. News Department have made no comment on the number of passengers to be released or on the number still detained.

30. News Department have made an on the record statement about the cancellation of the Secretary of State's visit to Rome because of the situation in Jordan.

(5)

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 20CT 1970

SITREP AT 18.30 B/S

I Situation in Jordan

This remains calm. The latest assessment (see Telex Conference at 15.30Z). The Government statement on Miss Khaled has helped to cool things down. There is a danger that the guerrillas may misinterpret the statement and expect early release.

II Future of Miss Khaled

Ministers agreed at this evening's meeting that she should remain at Ealing Police Station for the time being.

III Passengers

Women and children released from the VC 10 have arrived at Heathrow.

The Swiss passengers (102) have left Nicosia for Zurich.

The TWA passengers (100) are thought to be over-nighting at Nicosia.

IV The Hostages

These number 56 of whom 8 are British. The Dutchman on the VC 10 has been released. Hostages are thought to be in Amman.

V The ICRC Negotiators

Amman informed us this morning that Freymond and Rochat had left. A more recent report from Berne suggests that they are still in Amman but expected to fly to Berne this evening.

VI The Israelis

The Israelis have detained 450 Arabs suspected of PFLP sympathies. They include two of Habbash's uncles. There is no report yet of the reaction to this in Jordan.

/ The Israelis

The Israelis reacted quietly to the Secretary of State's message to Mr. Eban, but remained adamant not to release further detainees.

VII The Germans

There were signs earlier that the Germans intended to make a separate deal. We have since heard that spines have stiffened in Bonn and their present position is in line with our own. There is to be a further meeting with German Ministers at 2130 this evening. The P.U.S. has spoken to the German Minister who has been in touch with Bonn and confirms that there is no change in the German position.

The German Embassy have now passed to us the instructions they are sending to their representative in Berne, and we have repeated these to our Embassy.

The instructions being telegraphed to Berne are also being flashed to Bonn for use with the Germans.

VIII The position in the Berne negotiations

We are sending instructions to Berne to call a five-power meeting this evening. This is to take place at midnight or as soon thereafter as Freymond arrives. The burden of our instructions is that we should still go for a five-power solution. We should, together with Swiss and Germans, bring pressure on Israelis and Americans to play a positive part. Particularly ~~the~~ we need an assurance that they are prepared to agree to an exchange of detainees. Otherwise there is the danger, increased by the Israelis arrest of Arabs that the PFLP will harden their terms and make it a condition of releasing Western hostages that the Israelis also release some of the Arabs whom they are detaining.

We are to press that Freymond or another ICRC personality should continue negotiations. If they refuse, alternatives are Swiss Ambassador to Beirut (also to Amman), Thalmann, or the U.S. Charge d'Affaire in Amman.

IX The American position

The Secretary of State has sent a personal message to Mr. Rogers through Mr. Freeman urging the need to persuade the Israelis that they must make an additional contribution to an exchange.

X The Body

The Home Office have confirmed that the dead hijacker is an American citizen. The P.U.S. has informed the U.S. Minister of this.

XI Tomorrow morning's Sitrep

The Duty Officer should finalise this and circulate by 9.00 a.m.

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RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

5
6

SITREP AT 0800 ON 14 SEPTEMBER
(All times referred to are B.S.T.)

I Situation in Jordan

H.M. Ambassador at Amman reported (Amman telegram No. 539) that the town had rapidly become calmer after the release of the statement of H.M.G.'s intention to release Leila Khaled as part of a package. He warned, however, that this statement might lead some Fedayeen erroneously to expect her early release.

2. Mr. Phillips confirmed this general assessment in a Telex conversation at 1630, in which he emphasised Leila Khaled's importance as a "symbol of Palestine resistance and a folk heroine".

II Future of Miss Khaled

3. In an earlier Telex conversation at 1215 he had warned that her transfer to Holloway would undoubtedly be misunderstood by the Fedayeen, and might lead to outbreaks of violence. As a result of this assessment, Ministers decided not to move her. The Home Secretary made an Order to amend the Aliens (Places of Detention) Order, which designates the police station where she is detained an approved place of detention. The Home Office made the following statement on the record:

"It seems best from all points of view that she [Miss Khaled] should not be moved at the present moment. The five-day period has been extended by the Home Secretary by use of his powers under the Aliens Order".

Unattributably, the Home Office said that to move Miss Khaled to prison might be misinterpreted by the guerrillas.

/III

CONFIDENTIAL

III The Passengers

4. Those released: A total of 59 passengers and crew of the VC 10 left Amman and arrived at Heathrow via Nicosia in the afternoon. They were met by Mr. Godber.

5. The Swiss passengers (102) travelled via Nicosia to Zurich. The 100 TWA passengers were thought to be spending the night in Nicosia.

6. Mrs. Potts

Shortly after arriving in London, Mrs. Potts, who, with her husband and two daughters had been on the hi-jacked VC 10, telephoned to ask if she could see someone from the Foreign Office. Her husband, a major in the Abu Dhabi Defence Force, was one of the hostages remaining in Amman in the hands of the P.F.L.P. Mr. Tripp visited Mrs. Potts, who was in the company of two of her husband's colleagues. They emphasised that, in the light of the various incidents at Dawson's Field, there was little time to lose if the remaining hostages were to be released safely, as they were "in the hands of dangerous maniacs". They suggested a unilateral deal of Leila Khaled for the remaining British hostages. Mr. Tripp said he was well aware of the dangers of the situation and would report this conversation to Ministers.

7. Remaining hostages: Amman telegram No. 543 reports that the breakdown of passengers and crew still detained by the P.F.L.P. is:

TWA	39
BOAC	9
Swissair	8
TOTAL	56

/The P.F.L.P.

(The P.F.L.P. had released the Dutchman whom they had originally intended to hold).

8. In his Telex conversation at 1215 Mr. Phillips said that, according to the Swiss Ambassador, who had it from the Red Crescent, the hostages were being held in a number of places in the southern part of Amman.

IV I.C.R.C.

9. In the same Telex conversation Mr. Phillips reported that Freymond and Rochat had left Amman. Jacquinot was left in charge. He was prepared to deal with the mechanics of an exchange, but not negotiate terms (see conversation at 1630).

V The Israelis

10. Mr. Eban received the Secretary of State's message of 13 September "quite calmly". (Tel Aviv telegram No. 825). He said he saw no reason for making new concessions and characterised the suggestion that the Israelis should make a further contribution as an "extraordinary idea". His reaction was confirmed at a Cabinet meeting, when no new decisions were taken (Tel Aviv telegram No. 828).

11. Israeli press reports claimed that several scores of Arabs had been detained by the Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Tel Aviv telegram No. 827). Those arrested are said to include women, children and two uncles of George Habbash. According to Reuters, Israel has officially announced that the Arab detainees number 450.

VI Negotiations for the release of Hostages

The German attitude

12. Mr. Phillips reported (Amman telegram No. 541) that, according to the German Embassy, Wichnewski, Mr. Brandt's

/special

special envoy, had been authorised to make a statement to the P.F.L.P. reaffirming German willingness to release the three Fedayeen prisoners held in Munich in return for the two German hostages. The P.F.L.P. had agreed to this deal.

However, Mr. Richards reported (Bonn telegram No. 1083) that a Federal Government statement issued at 1330 hours said that Wichnewski had been acting "on his own initiative". The statement reaffirmed the readiness of the Federal Government to release the three Arab prisoners held in Germany as soon as pre-conditions for this had been fulfilled.

13. The P.U.S. spoke to the German Minister who said there had been no change in the German position. This was confirmed by a telephone call from Mr. Richards from the Embassy in Bonn, who said the Federal Government were quite firm about staying in step with the other members of the Berne group for as long as possible. This attitude was also reflected in the instructions sent to the German representative in Berne, which were passed to us by the German Embassy.

The Americans

14. Washington telegram No. 2676 gives Mr. Freeman's assessment of the four main pre-occupations of the U.S. Administration. These are:

- (a) In a fluid and fast-moving situation they see advantage in proceeding cautiously and completing each stage of the complicated negotiations before embarking on the next.
- (b) They are acutely anxious about the position of their dual nationals.
- (c) They are convinced that direct pressure on Jerusalem tends to make the Israelis more intransigent.

(d)

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18. This telegram crossed with two F.C.O. telegrams (Nos. 2031 and 2032) instructing Mr. Freeman to put certain points to Mr. Rogers and pass to him a message. The text of the message delivered is:

"John Freeman has told me of his conversation with you earlier today and I am of course considering what you said to him. I have asked him to give you this message urgently. It is our considered judgement that we shall not be able to hold the Berne group together unless the Israelis make a positive sign, and quickly, that they are willing in principle to exchange prisoners for hostages. You will have seen already the difficulty of the Germans and the Swiss in not making individual deals. We have a lot of sympathy with them, because we cannot put ourselves at the mercy of Israel's tactical moves in relation to the Fedayeen. If therefore, like us, you want to hold the group together I am sure that you must exert the maximum pressure on the Israelis, and soon. You may find yourself in the position you want to avoid of being left alone with the Israelis to bargain for the return of the American citizens. We will do all we possibly can to act together, but I felt I had to make quite plain to you the danger of the group disintegrating".

19. At 0235 Washington asked the Unit by telephone for confirmation of these instructions. Mr. Graham (who confirmed to the Unit that Washington telegram No. 2678 had not been received when the instructions were drafted) said that H.M. Ambassador should proceed with his instructions. He should stress the following points not covered by Mr. Rogers' earlier Reply:

/(i)

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(d) Their overriding concern remains the longer-term problem of the Arab/Israel peace negotiations.

15. In a conversation with Mr. Sisco (Washington telegram No. 2677) Mr. Freeman elicited that the U.S. position continued to be that the paramount need was for the five powers to maintain a united front; and that the problem of smoking out the Israelis would probably have to be faced, but not yet. Sisco emphasised that he thought that, with the release of the majority of the passengers, a new situation had arisen which needed careful examination.

16. Meanwhile, the Secretary of State sent a personal message to H.M. Ambassador in Washington expressing his concern about the Americans' apparent passivity. The Secretary of State emphasised the importance he attached to the question of an Israeli contribution to the package and asked Mr. Freeman to have a frank talk with Mr. Rogers (F.C.O. telegram No. 2029) to Washington.

17. Mr. Freeman saw Mr. Rogers at 2100 (Washington telegram No. 2678). Mr. Rogers agreed that the best way to secure the release of the hostages was still joint five-power action. But he refused to budge on the question of obtaining Israeli contribution to a package and the consequent urgency of exerting pressure on the Israelis. According to Mr. Freeman, Mr. Rogers clearly took a more optimistic view of the situation than the British did. Mr. Rogers believed that natural pressures would begin to make themselves felt on the Israelis and that these would in the end cause them to show some flexibility.

/18.

- (i) H.M.G.'s view that the hostages were in the hands of desperate men and therefore at considerable risk;
- (ii) H.M.G.'s view that time was not on our side;
- (iii) H.M.G.'s fears that the Berne group was in danger of disintegrating.

20. H.M. Ambassador was informed by telephone and said he would proceed on this basis. He reported in Washington telegram No. 2679 that he had taken action and Rogers had taken careful note of what he had said.

Instructions to Berne

21. After Ministers had reviewed the situation in the light of the Berne meeting of 12 September, instructions were sent to Berne requesting Mr. Midgely to arrange for a meeting of the Group as soon as possible. Mr. Midgely was instructed to take the line that the British position was still to work for a five-power package, and that we, the Swiss and the Germans should bring pressure on the Israelis and the Americans to play a positive part. In particular, an assurance was needed from them that they were prepared to agree to an exchange of detainees.

22. Mr. Midgely was also instructed to raise the question of who should continue the negotiations. If the I.C.R.C. refuse to cooperate, possible alternatives might be the Swiss Ambassador at Beirut and Amman, Thalman, or the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Amman. During his meeting with Mr. Freeman, Mr. Rogers had already expressed agreement to this proposal, though he had not committed himself on the name of the new negotiator. One of the most important tasks of the new negotiator would be to elicit from the Fedayeen the names of those they wished the Israelis to release.

The Meeting

23. The five-power group met at 0115 (Berne telegram No. 257). Proceedings were confused. The I.C.R.C. reported that they had not withdrawn from Amman. Jacquinet had been left in charge and his job there was not confined to humanitarian activities. Freymond would be unable to return to Amman owing to previous arrangements but the I.C.R.C. were looking for someone else when Jacquinet needed reinforcement. Jacquinet would be directed to establish an authoritative list of those still detained by the P.F.L.P.; to discover their whereabouts and obtain access to them; to elicit a complete list of Fedayeen demands on all five governments; and to maintain contact with the P.F.L.P. Freymond told the meeting that it was now essential to enlist the help of the Jordanian Government. Mr. Midgeley urged that time was not on our side but the U.S. Ambassador thought it would be a mistake to take an initiative in the immediate future. The Swiss Foreign Minister agreed. The meeting agreed that the Swiss and Germans should contact the P.F.L.P. through the I.C.R.C. and Wischniewski respectively asking for complete lists of hostages and demands.

VII The Body

24. The Home Office confirmed that the dead hi-jacker is an American citizen. The P.U.S. informed the U.S. Minister of this.

VIII Daily Telegraph Report

25. The Prime Minister called the Emergency Unit at 0140 hours, and instructed that a telegram be sent to Berne and other posts drawing their attention to a report in the early morning edition of the Daily Telegraph. The report said that

/Mgf.

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Mgr. Jean Rodhain, President of Caritas International, had had talks with the P.F.L.P. in Amman. Mgr. Rodhain was quoted as saying that the Fedayeen had agreed to negotiate for the liberation of hostages in exchange for the freeing by Israel of 600 prisoners. See F.C.O. telegram No. 168 to Berne. In reply Mr. Midgeley reported that the Federal Foreign Minister had confirmed this report in general terms and had said that Mgr. Rodhain had now left Jordan for Israel. (Berne telegram No. 168).

IX Press Line

26. M. Freymond, Vice-President of the International Red Cross in Switzerland, stated that there was nothing more for the Red Cross to do except on the humanitarian side. News Department took the line that this statement would be noted and be the subject of discussion at the meeting of the joint five-powers in Berne.

27. According to the B.B.C. (0700) M. Naville has since said that there has never been any question of the Red Cross discontinuing negotiations.

28. Otherwise News Department have had a relatively quiet night.

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SITREP AT 0800 ON 15 SEPTEMBER

[All times referred to are B.S.T.]

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 20CT 1970

I Situation in Jordan

The night 13/14 September was quiet but the situation has grown more tense following the killing of Fedayeen, including Fatah officers near Irbid. A steady trickle of the British community have been leaving the country. A total of 177, including Embassy staff, remain. (Amman telegram No. 548).

2. Contingency evacuation plans for the British community are still on ice; Ministers have agreed that the Britannias should return to the U.K. on six hours' readiness. The Argosy aircraft would remain in Cyprus.

II The Hostages

3. The Israeli Intelligence Headquarters reported that the hostages had been divided into groups. One "particularly sensitive" group was in a former women's military camp. (Tel Aviv telegram No. 837).

4. Two similar letters from the BOAC hostages were delivered to H.M. Ambassador at Amman via the Palestine Red Crescent and the German Embassy (Amman telegrams Nos. 556 and 557).

Mr. Phillips commented that the messages must have been approved by the P.F.L.P. The hostages say they understand they are being held against the release to an Arab country of Leila Khaled and perhaps the dead body; they emphasise the gravity of the situation, request her release and ask to be visited. The first message is signed by:

/Richard Dunn

Richard Dunn, Solicitor

Captain C. Goulborn, Captain BOAC

E/O E.R. D'Eye, BOAC

Second Officer J. Lindsay, BOAC

Lt. Commander J. Wallis, R.N.

Mr. E. Hartill

Mr. R.F. Dare, B.P.

Major F.N. Potts, M.B.E., T.D., Abu Dhabi Defence Force

Mr. G.H.W. de Koning, BOAC, Dutch (Reuters subsequently reported he had been released)

The second letter is signed by the three BOAC crew members.

5. De Koning later gave the names of the following additional Swiss hostages:

Ernst Eng Hollenweider

Horst Jerosch

Hans Slidher

Norbert Kuster

Walber Yost

6. The Embassy made urgent but unsuccessful efforts through the Red Cross to arrange for consular access to the British hostages: but Ghazi Saudi of the Palestine Red Crescent informed Mr. Phillips in the evening that the P.F.L.P. attitude appeared to be hardening (probably as a result of Israeli arrests of Arabs on the West Bank) and the Fedayeen had refused all outside access to the hostages. (Amman telegram No. 560). Thus an earlier offer to BOAC and Swissair of access to their passengers was later cancelled.

7. Saudi also implied the P.F.L.P. were thinking in terms of holding all the Western hostages, as well as the Israeli

/ones,

ones, until both the Israeli-held prisoners and the seven Fedayeen held in Europe were released (i.e. a package deal).

8. Reuters reported in the evening that the P.F.L.P. had announced they considered the American and Israeli hostages as one group. They had closed the door on all further mediation to obtain the release of the hi-jacked airline hostages.

III Libyan Initiative

9. The Libyan Government offered themselves as mediators between the British Government and the guerilla organisation (Tripoli telegram No. 1286) but did not give precise details as to how they intended to achieve this.

10. H.M. Embassy were instructed (F.C.O. telegram No. 901) to establish that the plan would not involve the release of all the passengers and crew still held by the P.F.L.P. in exchange for the seven Fedayeen detained in Europe; if this were correct, they should thank the Libyans for their offer, but point out that matters were still in the hands of the Red Cross and that the most helpful thing the Libyans could do would be to issue a statement condemning hi-jacking in general.

IV The I.C.R.C. Negotiator

11. Mr. Phillips reported (Amman telegram No. 549) that in his view Jacquinot was not an adequate negotiator capable of obtaining a complete list of Fedayeen demands on all five governments. He had made it clear that he conceived his task as a purely humanitarian one and had said he would on no account talk to the P.F.L.P. Mr. Phillips later reported that Jacquinot had made a little progress, a junior member of his staff having visited the P.F.L.P. and been shown a draft

/list

list of names, which he had not however been allowed to read (Amman telegram No. 560).

12. Mr. Phillips did not however alter his earlier recommendation that an alternative negotiator, possibly Melchior Borsinger de Baden (the I.C.R.C. Delegate General for Europe) be appointed.

13. In the light of this H.M. Ambassador at Berne spoke on a personal basis to Thalmann who said that the Swiss Government had just decided to press the I.C.R.C. to appoint a fully qualified negotiator (Berne telegram No. 261). The Germans told H.M. Embassy in Bonn that they agreed a competent negotiator was essential. The State Department, however, saw no advantage in sending out a fresh high level negotiator (Washington telegram No. 2688).

V Negotiations in Berne

14. The Berne Group met at 20.00 (Berne telegram No. 265). Mr. Midgley had been instructed by telephone to express concern about the lack of progress and to urge that the I.C.R.C. send out a negotiator capable of achieving results, possibly M. Borsinger-Baden.

15. The meeting was long, with much inconclusive discussion. The Germans agreed the situation was urgent and warned that Germany might feel compelled to start separate negotiations. The American was predictably relaxed. The British representative spoke as instructed.

16. The most important result was that the I.C.R.C. reported they had summoned back to Geneva the Head of the I.C.R.C. delegation in Cairo with the intention of offering him the Amman post. He has already arranged exchanges of prisoners

/between

between the Arabs and Israelis. However the earliest he could be in Amman was 16 September. The British representative argued for an immediate announcement on this, but was opposed by the American and Swiss.

17. The Group agreed to meet again at 11.00 15 September after which the following announcement would be issued:

"The Berne Consultative Group of representatives of the countries concerned met at 11.00. It heard a report from the I.C.R.C. that the I.C.R.C. representatives in Amman met this morning the Jordanian Prime Minister and will meet this afternoon representatives of the P.F.L.P.

The Group expects to receive a report on these talks late this evening".

Following a Ministerial meeting attended by Sir P. Adams, new instructions were sent to Mr. Midgley (F.C.O. telegram No. 170). He is to urge that the I.C.R.C. nominate their new negotiator without further delay and approve a reference to the man they have in mind in the proposed announcement. Mr. Midgley is to stress the importance of securing Israeli agreement in principle to release some Arab detainees.

VI Press Line

Libyan Plan

18. Unattributably the I.C.R.C. is the appropriate body for negotiation and we shall continue to work through them. We are pleased that the offer has been made on humanitarian grounds.

/The Body

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The Body

19. The following line was agreed with the U.S. Embassy. The U.S. authorities have now confirmed to H.M.G. that the hi-jacker of the El-Al plane was Patrick Joseph Arguello, a U.S. citizen resident in Nicaragua and travelling on a U.S. passport. The U.S. Government do not believe they have the right to demand the possession of the body or object to the proposed disposition.

Messages

20. News Department have confirmed that the British Embassy in Amman received more than one letter yesterday from the hostages. They did not go into details but ~~stated~~ indicated that they were appeals for help. We have been trying to get Consular access but have so far been unsuccessful.

21. If asked about "Consular" access News Department propose to take the line that although not negotiating with a Government the Embassy's Consular Officer is best fitted ^{with British objectives} to ~~conduct such negotiations~~.

P.F.L.P. refusal to negotiate

22. Reuters reported that the P.F.L.P. said tonight (14th) that it had closed the door on all further mediation to obtain the release of hi-jacked airline hostages. The line is that there is no official confirmation of this report.

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SITREP AT 0800, 16 SEPTEMBER

[All times referred to are B.S.T.]

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
17 SEP 1970
NEJ 1/4

I Situation in Jordan

Two members of the Embassy staff in Amman were summoned on the evening of 15 September by Prince Hassan and Zaid Rafai. They were told that the Government and the Chief of Staff had resigned and that a military government was about to be formed. This was to be announced at 0500 on 16 September. The intention was that the Army would then surround Amman and settle accounts with the Fedayeen (Amman telegram No. 584). *182*

2. In a Telex conversation at 0200 H.M. Ambassador at Amman reported the King was at Hommar. Mr. Phillips said there was no likelihood of being able to arrange an evacuation of the British community.

3. Arab posts have been alerted to the situation in Jordan and advised to take whatever precautions they think necessary. (F.C.O. telegram No. 884 to Cairo). *204*

4. In a Telex conversation at 0530 the Embassy in Amman said the announcement had been made of the formation of a military Government, but reported that the situation remained quiet and that traffic was moving normally. There was no fighting. Reuters have carried news of the change of Government since 0600.

5. Earlier in the same conversation we put it to Amman that we should ask the B.B.C. to broadcast a statement calling on the Jordan Government to ensure the safety of British lives and property.

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and property. The Embassy said they preferred no statement to be issued until (and if) fighting breaks out. If it does, they will report promptly.

II Meeting at No. 10 Downing Street at 0100 to discuss developments in Jordan

6. The Prime Minister, Secretary of State, Permanent Under-Secretary and Sir Philip Adams met. They instructed H.M. Ambassador at Amman to ask the King urgently to make a public appeal for the safety of the hostages and all foreign nationals (Telex conversation 0500). The Permanent Under-Secretary spoke on the telephone to General Haig at the White House (in the absence of Kissinger). (F.C.O. telegram No. 203 2055 to Washington). Haig stated categorically that the U.S. Government had no prior knowledge of the plan to install a military Government. The Americans had secured an undertaking from King Hussein that, in the announcement he intends to make on the formation of a military Government, he will call on the Fedayeen not to harm the hostages. Otherwise the U.S. Government have taken no action, but Haig would not rule out the possibility of their giving our support for the Jordan Army.

7. The P.U.S. subsequently spoke to Mr. Sisco of the State Department. Sisco stated that the American assessment of the situation in Jordan was different from ours. The American view is that the King will fight only if the Fedayeen attack first. Sisco added that Amman had been surrounded by troops for weeks and the only change would be the emergence of a military Government. He thought that if things went wrong for King Hussein, the Israelis would intervene.

/III

III The Hostages

8. In the Telex conversation at 0200 hours Mr. Phillips said the King was aware of the danger to the Western hostages but intended to take action against the Fedayeen nevertheless.

9. We do not know for certain the whereabouts of the hostages. Zein, the Director-General of Trade in Sharjah, known both to Dunn, one of the hostages, and the P.F.L.P. secured an interview with Dunn who said the hostages were being well looked after but they expected a move in the near future. Zein brought a letter from the hostages saying that conditions were fair. (Amman telegrams Nos. 581 and 582). BOAC reported that the hostages had been split up into smaller groups and removed from Amman; the P.F.L.P. had no intention of harming the hostages. (Amman telegram No. 585).

10. The latest report from the Embassy in Amman is that the hostages were in a group of houses in Ashrafiya adjoining the Wafdalut Camp. (Telex conference at 0500).

11. The attempts of H.M. Embassy in Amman to contact the hostages have proved fruitless. The P.F.L.P. told Michael Adams of the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding that there would be no question of a consular visit to the hostages unless a visit to Leila Khaled could be arranged (Amman telegram No. 575). We have also had an approach from Miss Kendall of the Palestine Red Crescent Society asking for access to Miss Khaled together with a doctor. /we have instructed Amman to ask the Palestine Red Crescent whether this arrangement would be agreeable to the P.F.L.P., and if so to agree provided we receive reciprocal

/access

access to all the British hostages. (F.C.O. telegram No. 319).

IV Negotiations in Amman

12. Jacquinot summoned the representatives of the four countries on the evening of 15 September to hear a report from his deputy Hocke on his meeting with the P.F.L.P. this afternoon. (Amman telegram No. 579).

13. The P.F.L.P. had told Hocke that they now insisted on a separate approach, country by country. Their terms for the release of the hostages were as follows:

- (a) the three Swiss-held Fedayeen in return for all Swiss nationals;
- (b) the three German-held Fedayeen in return for all German hostages;
- (c) Leila Khaled and the body of the hi-jacker in return for all British nationals.

14. The P.F.L.P. also demanded an official statement by the Israeli Government agreeing in principle to free the two Algerians arrested in Tel Aviv, one Swiss boy at Haifa, the ten Lebanese captured in exchange for Rosenwasser, in addition to an undertaking to exchange commandos against hostages. The P.F.L.P. will release a list of persons to be released in exchange for the Israeli and dual Israeli/American hostages. It was made clear that the U.S. citizens fell into this category. (Berne telegram No. 273 confirms these terms).

15. Hocke said that if he were to go back to the P.F.L.P. to convey the agreement of the Five Powers to these terms, he was sure that the Red Cross would be accepted as the body to negotiate the mechanics of the exchange.

16. There has also been discussion in Amman of the possibility of an informal meeting between the representatives of the four countries and the Palestine Red Crescent.

V Developments in Berne

17. A meeting of the Five Power group was held in the morning of 15 September at which agreement was reached that an announcement would be made on 16 September of the appointment of Boisard as the new I.C.R.C. negotiator (Berne telegram No. 268). The meeting issued a neutral announcement that the Berne Group had been informed that the I.C.R.C. delegation in Amman would continue to take action. A report on the result of present negotiations was expected shortly.

18. H.M. Ambassador emphasised that this announcement did not satisfy our need for an early announcement of Boisard's appointment.

19. However, at about 2130 Mr. West telephoned from Berne to say that the I.C.R.C. had already announced that Boisard, together with Boissier, another member of the I.C.R.C., would go to Amman, the latter immediately. Mr. West could throw no light on this volte face by the I.C.R.C. who had only just before claimed it was impossible to make an announcement before tomorrow. The Americans in Berne were taking this calmly.

20. At 2305 Mr. West telephoned again to say that the Germans had requested a Five Power meeting by midnight. The Unit spoke to Mr. Brooks-Richard in Bonn who elicited from the German Foreign Ministry that the Germans were calling the meeting in order to demand new terms of reference for a negotiator which should be binding on all Five Powers.

21. The Unit spoke to Mr. Tripp who said that Mr. West should be told urgently that the British should not get out of alignment with the Germans and the Swiss.

22. The Unit spoke again to Mr. West who said the meeting was still in progress. The German representative was under instructions from a "very high authority". His Government wanted a clear mandate for the I.C.R.C. for negotiation with appropriate participation from all governments by noon today. Otherwise the Germans would consider alternative action. When asked what was meant by a "clear mandate" Von Keller said this meant a realistic and adequate contribution from the Israelis. The Israelis rejected this.

23. Mr. West stressed that the Swiss were not weakening. After the meeting he telephoned again to say that the Swiss had told the Ambassador that they wished to consult with us and establish a common line in case the Germans did break ranks. It was agreed that a meeting between the Swiss and the British should take place at 11 o'clock this morning. Mr. West has asked for instructions before the 11 o'clock meeting. (see Berne telegram No. 274).



RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

SITREP at 0700 on 17 September, 1970

(all times referred to are BST)

SECTION I : Jordan Internal

On 16 September the situation was tense but comparatively quiet. At 0400 on 17 September firing broke out in Amman; by 0500 this had become more general. (Amman Tel. Nos. 604 and 606)

2. Mr. Phillips saw the King at Hamar on the morning of 16 September. The King said his purpose in forming the new military government was both to ensure that his own troops would be kept in better discipline and also to ensure that if they had to fight the Fedayeen they would be effectively led and directed (Amman Tel. No. 596). The King also said that the agreement concluded the previous day between the Fedayeen and the old government would be respected by the new government. This agreement provided for a reduction of military guard and security forces in Amman on the one hand and the withdrawal of the Fedayeen from military posts and positions in the city on the other (Amman Tel. No. 587). The King was pleased with the reactions so far to his new government. He said that his conversation with Embassy staff the previous night foreshadowing a showdown between the army and the Fedayeen had been meant to convey only that force would be used to meet force. He still feared that it might come to this, although he hoped not.

/31 . . .

3. Mr. Phillips commented (Amman Tel. No. 597) that he was inclined to accept the King's explanation of his motives.

4. In a Telex conversation at 1730, Mr. Phillips reported that a general strike had been called for 17 September.

US Assessment of the Situation in Jordan

5. The American assessment is more optimistic than the British: they consider that during the night and early morning of 15/16 September the situation was potentially very dangerous, but after that there seemed a fair prospect of the crisis diminishing or disappearing (Berne Tels. Nos. 277 and 278).

Israeli Assessment of the Situation in Jordan

6. Mr. Barnes reported from Tel Aviv (Tel. No. 851) that, in the view of the MFA, the King had at last been driven by the deteriorating situation into taking firm action which he should have taken earlier. He had realised that unless he gave support to the army he would lose control completely. The Israeli MFA thought he had acted just in time and that with luck he should be able to avoid the drift to chaos.

SECTION II : The Hostages

7. HM Ambassador reported in his Telex conversation that he had no further news of their whereabouts. However, Amman Tel. No. 590 contains a message from the BOAC captain stating that the hostages were being treated "most fairly" in the circumstances, and had better food than their guards. Conditions were very crowded and perilous. The captain said morale was high but asked that the hostages should be got out as soon as possible.

/SECTION III

SECTION III : Negotiations in Amman

8. Mr. Phillips also reported in this conversation that there was little further news from the Red Cross. They were waiting for further instructions from the Berne Group on the most recent PFLP terms. Boissier, the new ICRC negotiator, was expected to arrive early on 17 September.

SECTION IV : Negotiations in Berne

9. Sir Philip Adams telephoned instructions to Mr. West early on 16 September in the following terms:

"In view of the prospect of civil war in Jordan and the consequent risks to all foreigners, particularly the hostages, HM Government consider it is essential that the Berne Group should now agree on a joint negotiating position.

You may imply (but not say in terms at this stage) that if the Berne Group cannot agree, eg. because of Israeli refusal to accept a principle of making a contribution over and above the Algerians, that HMG will feel free to seek other means of securing the early release of British hostages".

10. The Berne Group met at 1600. HM Ambassador had previously told the Swiss alone^{of} the line he would be taking. At the meeting the Israeli Ambassador said that he was not authorised to make any advance on the two Algerians as an Israeli contribution to the package. There was almost complete identity of view between the Germans and the British.

/11. . . .

11. At the end of the meeting the US Ambassador on instructions put forward the following formula:

"The Berne Group should furnish the ICRC with a mandate indicating that the five Governments agree to consider the proposal of the PFLP at such a time as the PFLP provides the Group with its total demands, including specific lists of the Fedayeen whom the PFLP wants."

(Berne Tel. No. 278)

12. Ministers considered the American formula. They thought it inadequate in the sense that it did not specifically provide for a contribution by each country to the total number of detainees to be released. Nevertheless, it was decided (FCO Tel. No. 620 to Bonn) that HM Ambassador at Berne should convey British acceptance of these terms to his colleagues on the understanding that they too would quickly agree so that Boissier could start tomorrow his efforts to extract a list from the PFLP.

13. On instructions HM Ambassador at Washington spoke to the Americans in this sense (Washington Tel. No. 2723). Mr. Campbell of the Embassy in Bonn spoke to the Federal Foreign Ministry who told him that the Germans' instructions to Berne were very similar to the British: the Germans agreed with our line. Mr. Campbell passed this information at 2315 on the telephone to the Unit who telegraphed it to Berne (FCO Tel. No. 174 to Berne).

14. A little earlier Mr. West had telephoned from Berne to say that the Group would meet on 17 September at 0800 or 0900 to discuss reactions to the American proposal.

/SECTION V

SECTION V : Miss Khaled

15. Negotiations have been in progress over reciprocal visits: i.e. that two nominees of the PFLP should visit Miss Khaled in exchange for consular access to the hostages. FCO Tel. No. 330 to Amman informs Mr. Phillips that there would be no objection to a visit to Miss Khaled by the two Red Crescent nominees (Ghazi Saudi and Mrs. Itisar Jurtaneh), but the visitors may not be alone with Miss Khaled. In return, the Embassy representative should not see the hostages alone.

SECTION VI : Beirut Airport

16. HM Ambassador at Beirut suggested further points which might be put to BALPA in an attempt to prevent their declaring a ban on Beirut airport (Beirut Tel. No. 452), due to come into force at midnight 16/17 September.

17. After consultation with Mr. Hanbury-Tenison, the Unit despatched a telegram to Beirut saying that BALPA had been unmoved by arguments similar to those now put forward by Mr. Edden, but giving him discretion to inform the Lebanese that BALPA's decision was not a governmental one;

STOP PRESS

At 0730 the communications staff in Amman reported that heavy firing was going on near the Embassy. The windows of the operations room had been smashed and they were therefore unable to send messages in cypher. They were taking cover but they will be able to receive and periodically despatch messages en clair.

/Cypher

Cypher communications have now been restored, and we have asked the Embassy whether the Amman telephone system is still working. It is (8.20 am).

Mr Tubb
keep
18/9
10

Middle East Crisis

Sitrep at 0700 on 18 September, 1970

(all times referred to are BST)

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 1 OCT 1970
NET 14

I Jordan Internal
General Situation

Fighting continued in Amman throughout the day, but at 2130 Amman reported in a telex conference that most areas had by then been cleared by military action. The night has been quiet, but dawn has brought artillery firing in the direction of Asrafiaya and Jebel Hussein. It appears to be directed away from the Embassy.

Communications

2. Efforts were made to allow HM Ambassador to get to the Embassy, but this appears to have been to no avail. Secure communication between H.E. and the Embassy is not currently possible. Similarly the telephone system is out of action and it has not proved possible to get in contact with the King; a telex conference proposed for 2230 did not take place.

Cease Fire

3. In the course of the afternoon, the Jordanian Prime Minister offered a cease fire on condition that guerrillas turned in their arms to their central bodies. The offer is understood to have been refused.

HMG's Statement

4. In the light of the situation in Jordan, HMG issued the following statement at 1045 hours.

/"In the light

"In the light of reports of serious developments in Jordan the British Government call on the Jordanian Government to ensure the safety of British lives and property in Jordan.

"The British Government also call on those with hostages in their hands to safeguard the lives of these hostages and of all other foreign nationals."

Iraqi Forces

5. The 2130 telex conference ended by reporting a rumour that Iraqi forces had been seen leaving Jordan, contrary to Fedayeen wishes.

II The Hostages

Location

6. There are conflicting reports on the whereabouts of the hostages. The French understand them to be held at Wahdat (Paris Tel. No. 849) which was to be held at all costs. The Americans believe them to be "outside Amman and in no immediate danger" (Washington Tel. No. 2731). The Israelis had identified three places where hostages were being held - Zerka, Jebel el Sufir and Wahdat.

Release

7. The King proposes that house to house searches should now take place throughout Amman which will, he intends, inter alia finish the Fedayeen in the city. Once he has established control, a curfew is to be imposed and with their guards isolated and unable to summon assistance it will be only a matter of time before the hostages are located. Since their captors may well attempt to use

/the hostages

the hostages as a means of survival, it is unlikely that there will be a bargaining phase.

Additional Hostages

8. Berne Tel. No. 285 reports that some further hostages have been taken from a group of foreigners at the Intercontinental. The group includes two Swiss, but it is not known if any UK nationals are involved.

III Negotiations for the Release of Hostages

Israeli Response to US Proposals

9. In Berne the Israeli Embassy gave the Swiss Government and ourselves the Israeli response to the formula proposed by the US representative at the meeting of the Berne Group on 16 September.

10. As Mrs. Meir was already on her way to Washington and M. Eban was about to leave Israel, no definite reply was possible. However, the Israelis thought that there was no possibility of fruitful negotiations in the present circumstances and they hesitated to take a position on the US formula "because that could lead to contradictory interpretations" (Berne Tel. No. 279).

Mr. Eban's View

11. The US Chargé d'Affaires in Tel Aviv spoke to Mr. Eban at the airport just before his departure, to seek Israeli acceptance of the American formula (Tel Aviv Tel. No. 860). Mr. Eban said that the Israeli Government could not sign a blank cheque in the absence of Mrs. Meir and himself; it would be very difficult for the Cabinet to change their position. In any case he thought it would be physically impossible to take any effective action in Amman at present (Tel Aviv Tel. No. 860).

12. The US Chargeé in Tel Aviv was subsequently told that the formula had been put to the Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, who also considered it impractical in the present circumstances. He thought that King Hussein might object if the ICRC were to approach the PFLP on behalf of the Berne Group at the present juncture, as he might consider such an approach contrary to his objective of dealing firmly with the Fedayeen. He suggested that the Americans should seek the King's view before any action was taken (Tel Aviv Tel. No. 864).

Call for Berne Group Meeting - New Formula

13. In view of the serious fighting in Amman, a telegram was sent to Berne (FCO Tel. No. 175) with instructions to call for an urgent meeting of the Group to discuss the following re-draft of the American formula:-

"The five Governments are ready to open negotiations about the proposal of the PFLP immediately the PFLP provide the Berne Group with their total demands, including specific lists of the Fedayeen whom the PFLP want. They have furnished the ICRC with an urgent mandate on this basis. Meanwhile they must make it clear that they will hold the PFLP responsible for the safety of the hostages in Jordan."

German Ambassador's Call

14. The German Ambassador called on Sir Denis Greenhill and said that he expected that he and the German Ambassador in Washington and Berne would be instructed to make representations in the three capitals that, to ensure that lives were not lost by further delay, the Four needed to take a collective decision

/permitting

permitting each to make individual arrangements to secure the release of the detainees. If the Americans were reluctant to agree to this, the Germans would like a decision on the same proposition from the Three. The Ambassador also confirmed that he had received instructions supporting his earlier remarks. (FCO Tel. No. 623)

Telephone Conversation - P.U.S., Sisco and Kissinger

15. Sir Denis Greenhill spoke to Dr. Kissinger and Mr.. Sisco at 1300 hours. Mr. Sisco said that our proposed re-draft of their formula sounded very good. The Permanent Under Secretary referred to the approach from the Germans and concern here about public opinion on the hostages. If the five-power approach were abandoned, there were three possibilities:-

- (a) the European prisoners could be exchanged for all prisoners except the Israelis (Mr. Sisco said they were dual US/Israel nationals);
- (b) the European prisoners could be exchanged for all the hostages; or
- (c) the Germans, Swiss and British could swap their prisoners for their hostages, leaving the Americans unprovided for.

Mr. Sisco said that the Americans would have difficulty with all three approaches and that HMG should weigh very carefully the likely reaction in the United States. The Permanent Under Secretary said that British public opinion would be outraged if British hostages suffered on account of the intransigence of another country (by implication Israel).

US Pressure on Israel

16. Mr. Sisco said that the Americans were putting pressure

/on the

on the Israelis for an Israeli contribution to the package (FCO Tel. No. 2073 to Washington).

Report of Berne Group Meeting

17. When the Berne Group met at 1600 hours the American and Swiss agreed to our re-draft of the US formula subject to the first sentence being modified to read:

"The Four Governments are ready to continue negotiations at once about the PFLP, as soon as the PFLP provides . . . " The Israeli said he could not agree to it without reference back to his government; and the German said his government would probably be unwilling to agree to it until they knew the Israelis were going to first.

Compromise Formula

18. In order to get round the PFLP's insistence on Israeli public acceptance of the principle of an exchange, the Americans proposed that:-

"The representatives on the Berne Group of the UK, USA, Germany and Switzerland will ask Naville, President of the ICRC, to telegraph to Boissier, saying that if the latter considers it would be helpful, he 'could point out to the PFLP that previously Israel has in effect already agreed to the principle of such exchanges by its exchange of prisoners for Israelis held by Syria in connexion with a previous TWA hijacking and by its evident willingness (as indicated privately to ICRC) to release two Algerians as part of an agreement in the present case'".

The Israeli did not dissent from this device (Berne Tel. No. 285).

Mr. West's Confirmation

19. Mr. West confirmed by telephone at about 2300 hours that this proposal has been put to Naville; but he did not know if a message had been sent to Boissier.

IV Beirut

20. Demonstrations have been banned by the government. Nonetheless one took place yesterday morning (Beirut telno. 454), but subsequently fizzled out. Elaborate precautions have been taken at the airport, but there have been no other incidents. Balpa have agreed not to impose a ban on flights into Beirut.

V Israel

21. The Israeli Ambassador with Mr. Eban is to see the Secretary of State at noon today. Tel Aviv think it unlikely that the Israelis will intervene (see Tel Aviv telno. 863) unless there is substantial Iraqi or Syrian intervention.

VI Amman Evacuation

22. Beirut have aircraft on call until the end of Saturday (telno. 455). They await instructions before committing themselves.

VII Miss Khaled

23. A plan has been drawn up, and submitted to the Prime Minister, for exchanging Miss Khaled and the body of her late colleague for the hostages. At the meeting in Berne Mr. Midgley was asked if he foresaw the possibility of an ICRC visit to Miss Khaled as a quid pro quo for an ICRC visit to the hostages. He thought this very possible.

/Neither

Neither the ICRC nor the Palestine Red Crescent has as yet visited Miss Khaled.

VIII Chinese Activity

24. Peking has reported (telno. 591) that the Chinese have been asked by the Swiss to mediate on their behalf to secure the release of the Swissair hostages. The Swiss apparently made no mention of the other hostages or of the ICRC efforts. The outcome of the Swiss request is as yet unknown. Peking further reports (telno. 593) that George Habbash is in Peking and the assessment of the U.A.R. Ambassador that the Chinese are likely to be opposed to the guerillas' hi-jacking activities if unwilling to exert pressure against them.

IX Possible U.S. Intervention in Jordan

25. Washington telno. 2747 reports that Dr. Kissinger has told Mr. Freeman that the White House had been taken by surprise by some "unpremeditated and somewhat highly coloured language" used by President Nixon in the course of background press briefings in Chicago. He is thought to have used phrases which dramatize the conflict with the Soviet Union in the Mediterranean and might be interpreted as encouraging Israeli intervention in Jordan. Dr. Kissinger asked that the Secretary of State should be assured that the President's remarks were not "the opening shot in a sharpening of confrontation". No decisions relevant to military action had been taken which the

/Secretary

SECRET

Secretary of State had not been told of. Dr. Kissinger asked that any official British comment should be kept in the lowest possible key. The Voice of America at 02.00 hours referred to reliable reports that the U.S. might intervene if Syria and Iraq were to attack Jordan.

STOP PRESS

Amman reported at 07.15 that H.M. Ambassador had arrived at the Embassy in a troop carrier.

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11

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

SITREP (Internal)

at 18.00 BST - 18 September

Jordan Internal

There have been telex conferences with Amman at 0900Z, 1100Z, 1230Z, 06.30Z and 13.35Z. The Ambassador returned by armoured car to the Embassy this morning at 07.15.

2. There are still reports of scattered firing in Amman mostly in the Wahdat and Djebel Hussein areas. The Ambassador said he is not altogether confident that the Army are mopping up as efficiently as they might and this has been confirmed by Israeli intelligence reports (Tel Aviv telegram No: FOH?).

3. Telephones are still cut off and the curfew continues. The Embassy has been unable to make contact with ICRC or with UK civilians. The airport is closed but under full Army control and could be opened when necessary.

BBC Reports

4. In the telex conference at 09.00Z the Ambassador reported that the King was very angry with BBC reporting of the present crisis. He said that the BBC were quoting Fatah sources. This has been taken up at a high level with the BBC. The BBC are keen to get their correspondents, who are believed to be in the Intercontinental Hotel, in touch with the Palace. (See telex conference at 12.30Z).

Berne Group

5. The Swiss called a meeting at 16.00 BST to review the situation. Mr. West was given up-to-date ^{non-confidential} information

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

/of our

of our telex conferences with Amman. He was also going to take up the question of the Israeli acceptance of our formula. In this context I think the wording of this formula may now be out of date. ~~and~~ With the concurrence of Sir P. Adams and Mr. Moon I suggested Mr. West phone back for new instructions if there appeared to be any chance that the Israelis were going to be more forthcoming. (See my minute to Private Secretary).

Situation in Lebanon

6. This is covered by Beirut telegram 459. Things seem quiet at present but may want watching.

Syrian Activity

7. We have had a report in our telex conference at 13.35Z that Syrian tanks are concentrating at the frontier and that the Palace think that "something may well happen". Rumours of the possibility of Syrian intervention have come to us from other sources. Nothing so far has been confirmed.

Secretary of State's Meeting with Next of Kin.

8. The Secretary of State met next of kin of hostages at 15.00. He explained HMG's position to them. A frank discussion ensued. A report is now being completed.



Middle East Crisis

SITREP at 0700 on 19 September, 1970

(all times referred to are BST)

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

SECTION I : Jordan

General situation

Reports of scattered firing in Amman have continued, and the initial successes of the Royalist forces have not been fully consolidated. H.M. Ambassador has said that he is not entirely confident that the Army are mopping up as efficiently as they might, since they are reluctant to leave their tanks and engage in close combat. Israeli sources have confirmed this view. Israeli sources have also reported that the Fedayeen are in control of Irbid, which is at the same time being shelled by the Army, and that the Iraqis are likely to disengage (Tel Aviv telno. FOH 181930B).

Syrian Activity

2. Information on the possibility of Syrian intervention has come from several sources. H.M. Ambassador reported in his 2115 telex conference that the Palace had claimed that Syrian tanks had crossed the frontier by some 250 yards and were shelling Jordanian positions. Israeli sources went some way to confirming this.

Diplomatic Action

3. H.M. Ambassador also reported that the King had asked for "diplomatic action". In response to this request, a telegram has

been sent to Cairo and Baghdad, asking for representations to be made to the Egyptians and the Iraqis unless the Ambassadors felt that such a move would be counterproductive. (F.C.O. telno 910 to Cairo).

4. The P.U.S. also spoke to the Soviet Ambassador at his home and informed him of the Syrian move. With reference to the Soviet representations to us on the evening of 18 September (see paragraph below) he asked the Soviet Ambassador to report the above facts to his government and to suggest that they should speak with the Syrians.

5. UKMIS New York were asked to report the events to U Thant and ask him to speak to the Syrian representative without disclosing the sources of his information. U Thant should link this to the representations which the Arab governments had made to him during the afternoon. UKMIS New York have since reported that Sir Colin Crowe has spoken to U Thant.

Soviet Ambassador

6. The Soviet Ambassador called on the P.U.S. on the evening of 18 September to inform him of a message which the Russians are about to send to the Americans (FCO telegram No. 799 to Moscow). The message hoped that the U.S. Government would agree that it was incumbent on all states concerned (including states external to the region) to act with caution and do nothing to make the situation more difficult. It hopes that the U.S. Government would use its influence to restrain Israel. The

/Russians

Russians had appealed to Jordan, Iraq, Syria and the U.A.R. and were trying to make their point of view known to the leadership of the "Palestinian Movement",

Communications in Amman

7. H.M. Ambassador remains at the Embassy. The telephones are still cut off and the curfew continues. The Embassy has been unable to contact either the ICRC or U.K. nationals. The airport is closed but under full army control, and could be opened when necessary. H.M. Ambassador and his First Secretary are both in intermittent contact with the King by radio telephone; Mr. Phillips hopes to see the King tomorrow and to obtain authority to get round the British Community.

SECTION II : Hostages

Location

8. There has been no hard news about the hostages. The Palace have reported that a house to house search is in progress in the Wahdat. It is however possible that the hostages have been moved to Mafraq, where they are being held by PFLP, surrounded by Iraqis themselves surrounded by Jordanians.

Nationality

9. Mr. Eban confirmed to the Secretary of State when he called yesterday that none of the hostages are straightforward Israeli nationals. Of the 35 Americans, 5 are rabbis and of these 2 are dual-nationals but resident in the U.S. and travelling on U.S. passports.

/Additional

Additional Hostages

10. It now seems likely that the report in Berne telno 285 that further hostages had been taken is inaccurate. Berne telno. 294 reports that no confirmation can be found for this story.

New Terms from PFLP

11. Washington telno. 2760 reports that the U.S. Embassy in Beirut has heard of new terms offered by the PFLP for the release of the hostages. These are understood to be the release of all hostages, except the Israelis and duals, in exchange for the 7 Fedayeen held in Europe plus the corpse.

Soviet Ambassador

12. In his conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, the P.U.S. said he hoped that, when speaking to the guerilla leadership about the Jordan internal situation, the Russians would use their influence to secure the early release of the hostages.

SECTION III : Berne Group Negotiations

Background to the Berne Group

13. Berne telegram No. 293 reported on the representatives of the four other countries in the Group, and recommended that when instructions were sent to Berne for use in Group, H.M. Ambassador at Bonn, Washington and Tel Aviv should, whenever practicable, be instructed simultaneously to approach the governments in the three capitals to send instructions to their Berne representatives.

/Meeting

Meeting

14. The Berne Group met at 1600 hours (Berne telegram No. 295). The Swiss reported that the Federal Council had decided to appeal to all those fighting in Jordan to spare the lives of the hostages; and to the Syrian, Iraqi and U.A.R. Governments and the Arab League to try to get the hostages moved from the danger zones into a neutral Arab country.

15. The President of the ICRC had said that the Red Cross could no longer concentrate entirely or mainly on the exchange of hostages: their prime concern must be to help all victims of the fighting. They believed that the hostages were in several groups, possibly of mixed nationality.

16. The German supported the British formula. The Israeli said he had no instructions: the question was being discussed between President Nixon and Mrs. Meir. When the Israeli was pressed, the American defended his position.

New Formula

17. The continued stone-walling by the Israelis and the situation in Jordan suggested that the British formula was no longer appropriate. Instructions were therefore sent to Berne early this morning (telegram No. 180), Washington and Bonn to seek early agreement in the Berne Group on a new formula on the following lines:-

"The Four/Five Governments hold responsible for the safety of the hostages all those in whose hands they may be. The Governments call upon those holding hostages to provide

/information

information on their whereabouts and well-being. The Governments stand ready to open negotiations at any time for the release of all the hostages. They also reaffirm their mandate to the ICRC."

Washington telno. 2763 reports that this text has had a favourable initial reception in the State Department.

P.U.S - Kissinger/Sisco

18. On the Prime Minister's instructions the P.U.S. rang Dr. Kissinger at the White House at about 0100 hours to ask the result of the day's meetings with the Israeli Prime Minister. Dr. Kissinger said that Mrs. Meir was very determined not to resume negotiations unless the violations of the cease fire by the Egyptians and the Russians were rectified. Dr. Kissinger was uncertain what had taken place between the Americans and the Israelis on the question of the hostages, and Mr. Sisco rang the P.U.S. later to say that no headway had been made on this subject. The Israelis, however, had not been entirely negative and he would try again on Saturday morning to make some progress on the proposed communique to be issued from the Berne Group. The Israelis gave the Americans the impression that they were waiting for the outcome of events in Jordan before making any move on the hostages.

/IV

IV Beirut

19. The Lebanon appears to be quiet at the moment (Beirut telno. 464).

V Mr. Eban

20. When he called on the Secretary of State, the Israeli Foreign Minister said he thought that the Berne Group were considering the next move over the hostages too much in isolation from the situation on the ground. Further negotiations must take into account who had sovereignty.

21. The seven Fedayeen held in Europe were known murderers of Israelis. Israeli opinion therefore thought it unreasonable that Israel should make a contribution to secure the release of the hostages.

22. Mr. Eban agreed with the Secretary of State that urgent contact should be made with King Hussain and that the ICRC should not at this stage be involved in further negotiations.

23. The Secretary of State told Mr. Eban of King Hussain's report that Israeli forces had opened fire across the cease-fire line. As the King had said he would deal with that area when Amman had been settled, the Israeli action was not helpful.

VI Amman Evacuation

24. No change.

VII Miss Khaled

25. No change.

/VIII

VIII U.S. Intention in Jordan

26. Washington telno. 2747 reports that the White House appears to have successfully scotched press stories deriving from the President's briefing in Chicago on 17 September. Press references have in fact been few.

IX B.B.C. Reports

27. The King has complained several times of the pro-Palestinian bias of the B.B.C.'s reports, comparing them unfavourably with the Voice of Israel. No.10 have also remarked on this bias. Mr. Reddaway has subsequently spoken to the acting Head of the B.B.C. who has promised to remedy the situation.

X Secretary of State's Meeting with Next of Kin

28. The Secretary of State met next of kin of hostages at 15.00 on 19 September. He explained H.M.G.'s position to them. A frank discussion ensued.

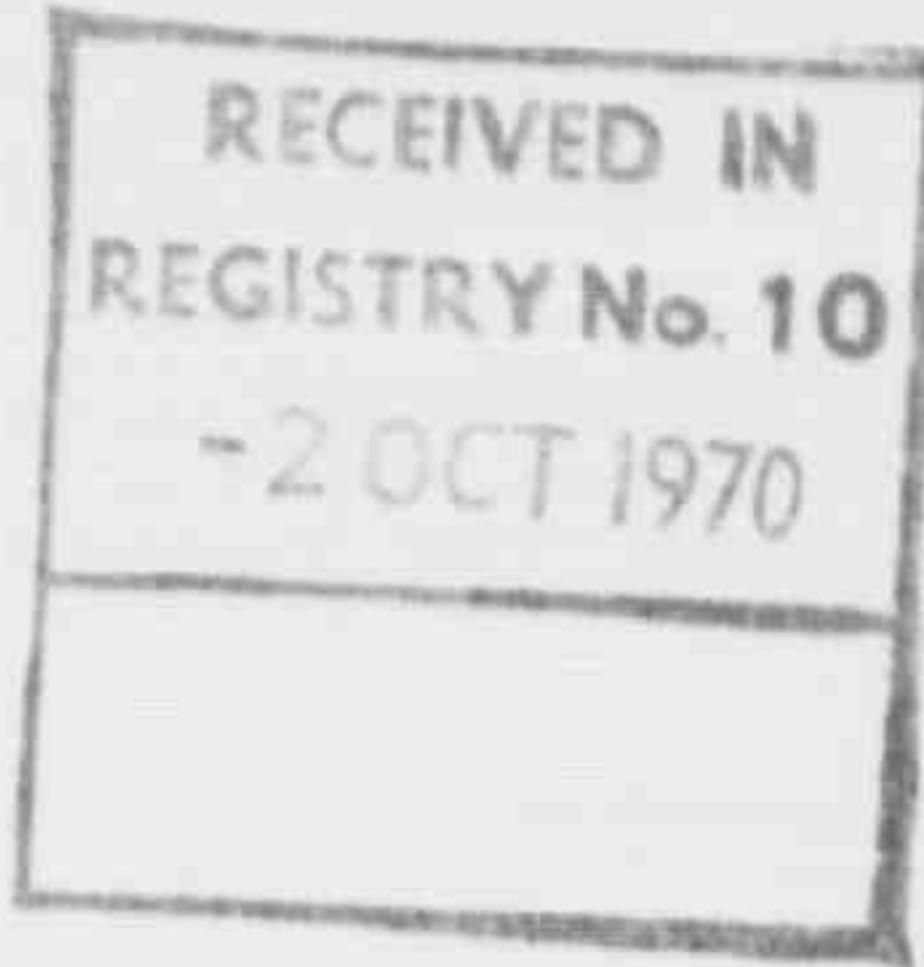
XI Libyan Attitudes

29. It is reported that a meeting of Arab Heads of State is shortly to take place in Tripoli to reconcile the warring factions. In addition Col. Qadafi met Nasser on 17 September; subsequently the U.A.R. Chief of Staff was sent to Amman with a message for King Hussain and Arafat from Nasser, Qadafi and Nimeiri. Tripoli telno. 1312 reports a uniformly hostile attitude to the Jordanian Government.

/XII

XII French Ambassador in Baghdad

30. H.M. Ambassador in Baghdad reported (telno. 630) that the French Ambassador had told him that he and his colleagues from "friendly countries" had been summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the small hours. They were asked to request their governments to use their good offices with the Jordan Government to avert further bloodshed



(12) (13)

Situation Report at 1800 on 19 September

I The situation in Amman.

Fighting has continued most of the day. Reports from Israeli sources, which appear to be the most reliable suggest that the army is gaining control of Amman. There have been frequent reports during the day that a cease fire has been called for but these reports emanate from Cairo and have been denied by the Palace. However, BBC carried a statement at 1700 that a cease fire had just been announced. We are checking this out with Amman.

II The Berne Group.

During the night we proposed a new formula which we wished the Berne Group to agree. The background to this is in paragraph 17 of this morning's Sit. Rep. The formula is as follows: "The Four/Five Governments hold responsible for the safety of the hostages all those in whose hands they may be. The Governments call upon those holding hostages to provide information on their whereabouts and well-being. The Governments stand ready to open negotiations at any time for the release of all the hostages. They also reaffirm their mandate to the ICRC."

The Germans have agreed to this. The Swiss have proposed only one fairly minor amendment. The initial American response was favourable, but the Americans said they would have to look at the formula again in the "cold light of morning". We had in fact received no response from them by 1500 our time. We therefore (a) telephoned Mr. West in Berne and said that he should call a meeting for five o'clock and express to his U.S. colleague the hope that instructions would be available by that time; and (b) telephoned Washington to hear from the Embassy that the Ambassador had just spoken to Sisco who was fairly content with the formula, but had some amendments to propose. The Americans agree however that they might be prepared to subscribe to a four power formula after all reasonable attempts to secure Israeli agreement failed. We therefore instructed Mr. West to put forward our formula, and gave him discretion to agree to minor amendments to the text which did not significantly water it down, but suggested that he should seek further instructions before accepting any significant amendments. We should hear the results of the meeting some time after six.

III The PFLP.

Berne telegram No. 297 contains the text of a message received by the ICRC from their delegation in Beirut, that Boissier and Boissard had been in contact with the PFLP leaders. The latter claimed to have heard that the U.S.

government had accepted the PFLP's conditions for freeing the hostages. The US Embassy here tells us this is not so.

IV Requests to pass on messages.

We have had requests for news about the welfare and whereabouts of their nationals from the Swiss, Swedes, Norwegians and the Pakistanis. I passed on the requests from the first three during the course of today, and have received replies which I have in turn passed on in telegrams to the posts concerned. We are asking the Embassy in Amman for information on Pakistanis in the 1700 telex conference; and also for confirmation of the position of one of the Swedish journalists, Ohlson, whom the Embassy reported (in the mid-day telex conference) to be in hospital, but who appears in a later list of those in the Intercontinental Hotel. Outstanding points for action will be (a) to let the Pakistanis know of any news we have (for contact see note on file) and (b) to let the Embassy in Stockholm ^(e. Mr. Ekholm) know the position of Ohlson.

V Hostages

We have had absolutely no firm news on them. An Israeli report quotes the King as being extremely worried about their fate.

VI Iraq and Syria

There has been no significant movement by either country during the day. There seems no indication that Iraq are

withdrawing, the Syrians do not appear to have advanced further than their overnight position.

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Middle East Crisis

SITREP at 0700 on 20 September, 1970
(all times referred to are BST)

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
- 2 OCT 1970

I : Jordan

Situation in Amman

H.M. Ambassador reported at 1700 that the main holocaust seemed to be nearly over, and that the King hoped to be able to lift the curfew at least in some parts of Amman in the course of 20 September. Israeli sources tend to confirm Mr. Phillips' view.

Syrian Activity

2. The Syrians do not appear to have advanced from their previous positions, but Israeli sources report that Syrian tanks have been firing on Jordanian troops near Ramta and that the Syrian Air Force has been put on alert (Tel Aviv telno. 876).

3. H.M. Ambassadors in Cairo and Baghdad have spoken to the governments concerned about the Syrian activity, as instructed in F.C.O. telno. 910 to Cairo of yesterday. Baghdad have reported that the Iraqi government thinks it most useful to put pressure on King Hussein (Baghdad telno. 636). Cairo report that the Egyptian objective is a general cease-fire (Cairo telno. 1034).

4. U Thant has not been able to get in touch with the Syrian delegate yet (UKMIS New York telno. 1974).

Foreigners in Amman

5. C.B.O. Bill Pink managed to reach the Intercontinental Hotel and to bring back a list of all foreigners, who, with one exception, are reported to be well. The exception, a Swede, had

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been removed to hospital with a minor bullet wound. The relevant Embassies in London have been informed of the names of their nationals. All members of the Berne group subsequently expressed their warm admiration for Pink's action (Berne telno. 299).

Communications in Amman

4. No change. The Ambassador has not yet been able to contact the British community.

Embassy Staff

5. Arrangements are in hand to send out additional staff to relieve temporarily those who have recently been under pressure.

Information from the Israelis

6. Tel Aviv have reported (telno. 876) that the flow of intelligence about Jordan from the Israelis has dried up somewhat. They ascribe this in part to the fact that we have little to offer them in exchange.

Exchange of Messages between King Hussein and the Prime Minister

7. The King sent a message to Mr. Heath expressing his appreciation of "Britain's evident moral support" (Amman telex conference 1700). In reply (F.C.O. telno. 356 to Amman) Mr. Heath told the King of H.M.G.'s distress at the suffering caused by the fighting. They were taking urgent action in response to the King's appeal for medical relief, and were grateful for his assurances that he was doing everything to secure the release of the hostages.

II : Medical Relief

8. The King has appealed to the British, American, French and Soviet governments for medical assistance to cope with

/casualties

casualties (civilian and fedayeen as well as Jordanian troops) who may number as many as 5,000 (telex conference at 1700 and 1930 hours).

9. H.M. Consul General in Geneva has been instructed to pass a message from King Hussein to the ICRC asking them to act as co-ordinators for the relief arrangements (F.C.O. telno. 34 to Geneva). An ICRC representative has told H.M. Consul General that the ICRC could in principle take on the co-ordinating task. However, the main committee would consider this problem today, 20 September. The Americans have agreed to this co-ordination; and we are in touch with the French and hope that they will do so too.

10. A statement issued by 10 Downing Street at midnight announced that H.M.G. were ready to respond to King Hussein's appeal as soon as possible. They were in touch with the ICRC about co-ordinating help. Medical and other relief supplies were being made ready in this country (F.C.O. telno. 35 to C.G. Geneva).

11. Lord Carrington has instructed the Ministry of Defence to give all possible assistance. The British Red Cross have undertaken to warn the Disaster Emergency Committee that an appeal may soon be forthcoming from the Jordanian government via the ICRC. The Treasury have been warned that a financial commitment is likely

III : Hostages

12. There is no further news on the hostages. The King has reiterated his warning that his troops should be most careful

/to avoid

to avoid harming them. In his message to the Prime Minister, King Hussein assured him that the Jordan government were continuing to do everything possible to secure the release of the hostages. This was reflected in the statement issued from No. 10 at midnight.

IV : Berne Group

Meeting

13. The Berne Group met at 1500 hours and agreed to the following revised version of H.M.G.'s new formula:-

"The five governments hold responsible for the safety of the hostages all those in whose hands they may be. The governments call upon those holding hostages to provide information on their whereabouts and well-being. They require that the hostages should be brought to a safe place which in the view of the governments is a prerequisite for an orderly transfer. The governments stand ready to consider at any time proposals for the release of all the hostages. The mandate to the ICRC has been reaffirmed." (Berne telno. 299).

ICRC Message from Beirut

14. The meeting also considered a message received by the ICRC (Geneva) from their delegation in Berne that the PFLP leaders had asked for confirmation of their understanding that the U.S. had accepted PFLP terms for freeing the hostages. If this were so, the PFLP would disclose by stages first the number and then the names of Palestinian detainees in Israel whom they wished to be freed. Subject to U.S. agreement at each stage, the PFLP would finally release the hostages (Berne telno. 297).

/The Berne Group

15. The Berne Group agreed a reply to the ICRC stating that neither the U.S. nor any other government had accepted the proposals put forward by the PFLP contact in Beirut and doubted whether he was in touch with or had any authority over those holding the hostages. The governments concerned could not consider any proposal until they had received a full list of hostages held by the PFLP, and the number and names of fedayeen in Israeli hands whose release they wanted (Berne telno. 299).

Mrs. Meir

16. In her talks in Washington Mrs. Meir continued to reject any idea of an exchange deal for the hostages and to maintain that Israel had already made its contribution in not objecting to a deal involving the prisoners in Western hands and in indicating that the two Algerians would not be a stumbling block (Washington telno. 2769).

V : B.B.C.

17. In his 1700 hours telex conference, Mr. Phillips said that he had explained our difficulties with the B.B.C. to the King and suggested that more information from the Jordanian government would help to produce a more balanced picture. Wasfi Tel said that things should improve now that the Jordanian telex was again functioning.

VI : Reactions in other Countries

South Yemen

18. Aden have reported a statement published by the South Yemen Foreign Ministry on 18 September which denounces the actions of the Jordanian government and attributes the current strife to

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"a reactionary-imperialist-zionist conspiracy to exterminate the Palestine resistance movement."

Soviet Union

19. Moscow report (telno. 1079) Tass and Izvestia as saying that further fighting can only benefit the "Tel Aviv extremists" and fearing that it will be used by "imperialist circles" to "further the situation for their own ends against the Arab peoples." An article in New Times expresses opposition to hijacking as a political weapon (Moscow telno. 1074).

Iraq

20. Baghdad suggest (telno. 635) that the Iraqi government has now determined on a more moderate course than the extreme line adopted at the beginning of the crisis. In particular they have withdrawn support from the PFLP and switched to the PLO.

Kuwait

21. The strike called by the PLO with the aim of stopping the Kuwait subvention to Jordan has been a failure. An anti-Hussein demonstration of some 4000 persons (mainly Palestinians) has taken place (Kuwait telno. 331).

Egypt

22. Cairo reports (telno. 1026) that editorial writers have avoided taking a position on the Jordanian/Palestinian issue by concentrating on condemning "Western imperialist adventures in the Arab conflict."

Libya

23. Tripoli telno. 1320 tells of a strongly worded message sent

/on

on 18 September by the new Libyan Foreign Minister to his Jordanian counterpart. Highly critical of the Jordan government, this message contrasts markedly with the non-committal message sent jointly by Nasser, Nimeiri and Qadafi. Libya has also terminated her subvention to Jordan.

VII : International Civil Aviation Organisation

24. Air Commodore Russell has reported from Montreal (UK Rep. ICAO telno. 32) that the ICAO Council met on 18 September to consider the U.S. draft proposals on reactions against hijacking. The U.S., Canadian, Indonesian, Tunisian and U.K. delegates spoke substantially. Canada presented their proposal and a working paper.

25. To allow more remote countries to instruct their representatives, it was agreed to resume on 29 September, although the U.S. would have preferred an earlier date.

VII : Further Hijackings

26. The German representative in the Berne Group said that his government had received a report that more hijackings of aircraft could be expected in the next 72 hours. The hijackers would use the passports removed from passengers on planes previously hijacked. Other representatives had received similar reports. (Berne telno. 298). The Board of Trade have warned airport authorities in this country.

IX : Miss Khalid

27. The ICRC in Geneva have told H.M. Consul General that they may soon be making a formal request to the British, German /and Swiss

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and Swiss governments to permit access by a senior ICRC doctor to the seven fedayeen held in Western Europe. The move would be designed to improve the ICRC's standing with the guerilla organisations in Jordan. H.M. Consul General will suggest to the ICRC that the chances of our agreeing were slight unless the PFLP grant reciprocity, i.e. access to our hostages whose whereabouts were completely unknown.

Stop Press

Amman Embassy communications

The Embassy reported at 0707 that their emergency power unit had been hit and was out of action. We are at present having difficulty in establishing two-way contact with Amman. If contact can be established traffic, especially cypher traffic, will take longer to transmit. It will not be possible to have telex conferences.

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